

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of communicating with a gaming machine, the method comprising:

providing a gaming machine that displays a wagering game, the gaming machine including a first wireless transceiver;

acquiring a portable data unit from a data unit provider, the portable data unit including a second wireless transceiver;

positioning the portable data unit in proximity to the gaming machine, without inserting the portable data unit into any portion of the gaming machine, to establish a wireless transmission link between the first and second wireless transceivers;

transmitting information between the portable data unit and the gaming machine via the wireless transmission link; and

encrypting the transmitted information via an algorithm combining a key with the transmitted information to create ciphertext into ciphered information.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitted information is selected from a group consisting of monetary information, player tracking information, player preferences, casino preferences, and gaming machine data.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the data unit provider is a gaming establishment.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the portable data unit is incorporated in a portable device selected from a group consisting of a card, a key, a portable telephone, a watch, a ring, a necklace, and a belt buckle.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including transferring the information between the gaming machine and a central host computer remote from the gaming machine.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the wireless transmission link is selected from a group consisting of a short range, radio link and an infrared link.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the first and second wireless transceivers are respective radio microchips.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the radio microchips and the radio link conform to a Bluetooth standard.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including authenticating the transmitted information.
10. (Canceled)
11. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including correcting errors in the transmitted information.
12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitted information includes a personal identifier, and further including transmitting the personal identifier from the gaming machine to a central host computer, the central host computer being remote from and linked to the gaming machine.
13. (Original) The method of claim 12, further including transmitting centralized information from the central host computer to the gaming machine.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the centralized information is selected from a group consisting of monetary information, award information, and game customization information.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the monetary information includes an account balance in a player's account associated with the personal identifier.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further including adding a number of credits to the gaming machine no greater than the account balance.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the game customization information adapts the gaming machine to player preferences.

18. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the personal identifier is associated with a player's account at the central host computer, and further including accessing account information in the player's account.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, further including transmitting centralized information from the central host computer to the gaming machine, the transmitted centralized information being determined by the account information.

20. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the monetary information corresponds to a number of credits, and further including adding the number of credits to the gaming machine.

21. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the player tracking information is selected from a group consisting of a personal identifier and game play data.

22. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of positioning the portable data unit in proximity to the gaming machine includes positioning the portable data unit within a predetermined distance of the gaming machine for at least a predetermined period of time.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the predetermined distance is no greater than about three feet.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the predetermined period of time is at least five seconds.

25. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first transceiver is disposed proximate a front center portion of the gaming machine.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the first transceiver is disposed at a height proximate to a height of a waist of an average standing person.

27. (Previously Presented) A method of communicating with a gaming machine, the method comprising:

providing a gaming machine that displays a wagering game, the gaming machine including a first radio microchip;

providing a central host computer remote from and coupled to a plurality of gaming machines including the gaming machine;

providing a portable data unit including a second radio microchip, the portable data unit storing an identifier associated with a player of the gaming machine;

in response to positioning the portable data unit in proximity to the gaming machine, without inserting the portable data unit into any portion of the gaming machine, establishing a short range, wireless radio link between the first and second radio microchips;

transmitting the identifier between the portable data unit and the gaming machine via the radio link; and

responsive to the transmitting, accessing from the central host computer information selected from the group consisting of player preferences for establishing a player's preferred gaming machine configuration, game play data, casino preferences, and gaming machine data.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the transmitted information is selected from a group consisting of monetary information, player tracking information, player preferences, casino preferences, and gaming machine data.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the portable data unit is incorporated in a portable device selected from a group consisting of a card, a key, a portable telephone, a watch, a ring, a necklace, and a belt buckle.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27, further including transferring the information between the gaming machine and a central host computer remote from the gaming machine.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, further including transferring centralized information stored at the central host computer from the central host computer to the gaming machine.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein the centralized information is determined at least in part by the information transferred from the gaming machine to the central host computer.

33. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the radio microchips and the radio link conform to a Bluetooth standard.

34. (Original) The method of claim 27, further including authenticating the transmitted information.

35. (Canceled)

36. (Original) The method of claim 27, further including correcting errors in the transmitted information.

37-40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently Amended) An arrangement for communicating with a gaming machine, comprising:

a first wireless transceiver mounted at the gaming machine, the gaming machine having a display that displays a wagering game;

a portable data unit including a second wireless transceiver and carried by an individual;

a wireless transmission link established between the first and second wireless transceivers in response to positioning the portable data unit in proximity to the gaming machine, without inserting the portable data unit into any portion of the gaming machine, the wireless transmission link transmitting information between the portable data unit and the gaming machine; and

means for encrypting the transmitted information into ciphered information via an algorithm combining a key with the transmitted information to create ciphertext.

42. (Previously Presented) The arrangement of claim 41, wherein the transmitted information is selected from a group consisting of monetary information, player tracking information, player preferences, casino preferences, and gaming machine data.

43. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, wherein the portable data unit is incorporated in a portable device selected from a group consisting of a card, a key, a portable telephone, a watch, a ring, a necklace, and a belt buckle.

44. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, further including means for transmitting the information between the gaming machine and a central host computer remote from the gaming machine.

45. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, wherein the wireless transmission link is selected from a group consisting of a short range, radio link and an infrared link.

46. (Original) The arrangement of claim 45, wherein the first and second wireless transceivers are respective radio microchips.

47. (Original) The arrangement of claim 46, wherein the radio microchips and the radio link conform to a Bluetooth standard.

48. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, further including means for authenticating the transmitted information.

49. (Canceled)

50. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, further including means for correcting errors in the transmitted information.

51. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, wherein the transmitted information includes a personal identifier, and further including means for transmitting the personal identifier from the gaming machine to a central host computer, the central host computer being remote from and linked to the gaming machine.

52. (Original) The arrangement of claim 51, further including means for transmitting centralized information from the central host computer to the gaming machine.

53. (Original) The arrangement of claim 52, wherein the centralized information is selected from a group consisting of monetary information, award information, and game customization information.

54. (Original) The arrangement of claim 53, wherein the monetary information includes an account balance in a player's account associated with the personal identifier.

55. (Previously Presented) The arrangement of claim 53, wherein the game customization information adapts the gaming machine to player preferences.

56. (Original) The arrangement of claim 51, wherein the personal identifier is associated with a player's account at the central host computer.

57. (Original) The arrangement of claim 56, further including means for transmitting centralized information from the central host computer to the gaming machine, the transmitted centralized information being determined by account information accessed from the player's account.

58. (Original) The arrangement of claim 42, wherein the monetary information corresponds to a number of credits, and further including means for adding the number of credits to the gaming machine.

59. (Original) The arrangement of claim 42, wherein the player tracking information is selected from a group consisting of a personal identifier and game play data.

60. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, wherein the wireless transmission link is established between the first and second wireless transceivers in response to positioning the portable data unit within a predetermined distance of the gaming machine for at least a predetermined period of time.

61. (Original) The arrangement of claim 60, wherein the predetermined distance is no greater than about three feet.

62. (Original) The arrangement of claim 60, wherein the predetermined period of time is at least five seconds.

63. (Original) The arrangement of claim 41, wherein the first transceiver is disposed proximate a front center portion of the gaming machine.

64. (Original) The arrangement of claim 63, wherein the first transceiver is disposed at a height proximate to a height of a waist of an average standing person.

65-74. (Canceled)

75. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the casino preferences include information selected from the group consisting of a hold percentage, a complimentary award rate, a complimentary award limit, and game eligibility.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the gaming machine data include information selected from the group consisting of a gaming machine identification, the number of coins played, the number of coins in the gaming machine, the number of coins paid out by the gaming machine, the number of games played on the gaming machine, and security information.

77. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, wherein the security information includes information selected from the group consisting of the number of door openings of the gaming machine, the number of coin hopper jams in the gaming machine, the number of blackouts experienced by the gaming machine, and a predetermined number of the previous security events.

78. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 77, wherein the security events include tilts and illegal pays.

79. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the game play data includes data selected from the group consisting of the identification of the last predetermined number of gaming machines played by the player associated with the personal identifier, information relating to the games played by the player associated with the personal identifier, the prizes won by the player associated with the personal identifier, the number of coins played by the player associated with the personal identifier, the number of coins paid out to the player

associated with the personal identifier, the number of games played by the player associated with the personal identifier, the time of play by the player associated with the personal identifier.

80. (Previously Presented) A system, comprising:

- a central host computer coupled to a plurality of gaming machines, at least one of the gaming machines including a display that displays a wagering game and a first wireless transceiver;
- a portable data unit including a second wireless transceiver and carried by an individual; and
- a wireless transmission link established between the first and second wireless transceivers in response to positioning the portable data unit in proximity to the at least one gaming machine, without inserting the portable data unit into any portion of the at least one gaming machine, the wireless transmission link transmitting an identifier associated with the individual between the portable data unit and the at least one gaming machine, wherein
 - the at least one gaming machine includes a controller programmed to receive, responsive to the wireless transmission link transmitting the identifier, from the central host computer information selected from the group consisting of player preferences for establishing a player's preferred gaming machine configuration, game play data, casino preferences, and gaming machine data.

81. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27, further including encrypting the transmitted information via an algorithm combining a key with the transmitted information to create ciphertext.